Volume 4 Number 2, 1993

MUNITIMES

Summer Construction on 19th Avenue

June 21st not only marked the first day of summer but also the start of construction on the first phase of Muni's $10 million, two-phase 19th Avenue Platform & Trackway Improvement Project. The project, designed to make Muni streetcar service more efficient by improving connections between the J Church line and the M Ocean View line, will replace boarding platforms along 19th Avenue as well as trackway near the platforms during the first construction phase from June through October.

Until the end of October, buses will substitute for M-line streetcars between West Portal Station and Balboa Park Station. M-line streetcars will turn back toward downtown just south of St. Francis Circle, using a temporary crossover track. In addition to M buses running from West Portal to Balboa Park, "M-college express" buses will run between St. Francis Circle and San Francisco State University during certain hours.

Phase II, scheduled to take place next summer from June to November 1994, will complete the project with the installation of permanent crossover tracks at Holloway and 19th, realignment of the Crespi intersection with 19th to allow for safer traffic operations, the replacement of badly worn tracks in the intersection of Junipero Serra and 19th, and installation of transit shelter, windscreens, lighting, seating and public phones on the new boarding platforms.

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Dear Rider,

With this issue of the *Muni Times*, we hope to return to a quarterly format. Budget constraints and printing cutbacks have forced us into a semi-annual publication schedule. Although our budget woes aren't over, we believe we have come up with a means to produce the *Muni Times* four times a year.

In this issue, we give you information on a number of projects that will benefit our passengers.

Photo: Carmen Magaña

Muni's general manager, Johnny B. Stein

Included are up-dates on the On-Time Program and the status of the Cable Car Museum, as well as stories on the Muni Passport, 14-Mission overhead wire upgrade, F-Market historic streetcar line, graffiti prevention, newspaper recycling, experimental advertising, and M-line construction.

As always, if you have questions, comments, or suggestions about any of the information provided to you in the Muni Times, I would like to hear from you.

Johnny B. Stein
General Manager

Pilot Recycling Program at Embarcadero Station

Photo: Carmen Magaña

Recycling at Embarcadero Station

Muni, in conjunction with the SF Recycling Program under the Chief Administrative Officer, has begun a pilot program at the Embarcadero Metro Station to encourage passengers to recycle their daily newspapers.

Last November, two large waste wheelers were placed at the top of the station's escalators with messages in English, Spanish and Chinese saying "Recycle Your Newspapers Here." As passengers come up the escalator, they can readily see the bins and deposit their papers.

The recycling program, which is not costing Muni anything, is potentially a big money, time and labor saver. If commuters recycle their papers on a regular basis, vehicle clean-up at the end of the line is greatly re duced because newspapers are less likely to be left on the cars.

BART has an on-going newspaper recycling program, which has been very successful. So far the pilot program at Muni's Embarcadero Metro Station is following suit. Golden Gate Disposal, the company that does BART's recycling also picks up the newspapers at Embarcadero Metro for recycling three times a week.

According to Shelly Rider, Recycling Project Coordinator for the SF Recycling Program, the pilot program at Embarcadero Station has been a success. Rider says that within the near future, newspaper recycling will expand to the other Muni Metro stations.

Captain Perfecto Takes His Message on the Road

In January, the Graffiti Prevention Program introduced a coloring book for elementary school students using a cartoon character named Captain Perfecto. Captain Perfecto is a kind of anti-graffiti superhero whose image will appear in the coloring book and on bus and transit shelter posters.

What is Captain Perfecto's message? Basically, it's a pride message. Take pride in San Francisco and take pride in Muni. Ride often, keep the buses clean and be proud of being part of the best transportation system in the country. After all, says Captain Perfecto, Muni can take you anywhere you want to go in San Francisco and even to Marin County.

In a series of 500 interior bus cards, which went up on Muni vehicles at the end of May, Captain Perfecto also cautions graffiti vandals against scribbling on public or private property emphasizing that graffiti vandalism is a crime.

In addition to using Captain Perfecto as an educational tool for elementary school students, Graffiti Prevention is also working with the drama departments at middle and high schools to produce skits for students aimed at empowering them and channeling their energies into creative arenas rather than destructive ones such as graffiti. Graffiti Prevention has also planned clean-up activities at local schools.

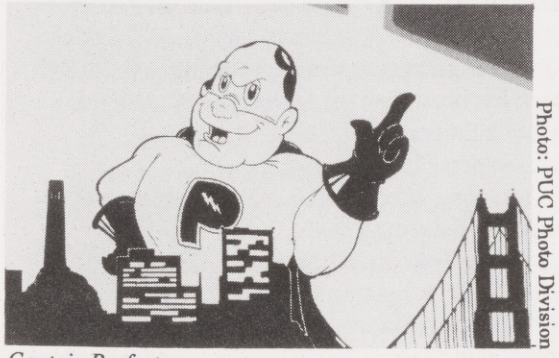

Photo: PUC Photo Division

Captain Perfecto

Experimental Advertising Program Continues

Muni and TDI, the Railway's advertising company began a pilot program in mid-February to test the feasibility of expanding advertising on Muni buses. If successful, the pilot program could pave the way for increased advertising revenues to the Muni – a definite boon to the City under the current economic conditions.

The pilot program placed advertising panels on three Muni buses from Presidio and Kirkland Division, which take up the whole side and back of the bus, including the windows. The portion of the ad covering the metal sides of the bus is painted contact paper. The portion covering the windows is a see-through film, called Contravision, made up of tiny dots that form a pattern. Contravision does not block passengers' views through the windows.

Photo: Carmen Magaña

Pepsi bus

The pilot program will extend for a year, during which time the Pepsi Cola Company will advertise its new Pepsi Crystal colorless soda and other products Muni and TDI are determining whether to expand this kind of advertising to more Muni vehicles.

On-Time Program Ends

Muni's $1.2 million Clean/On-Time Program ended on June 30th. The $1.2 million Clean/On-Time Program was designed to give back fares to passengers who had to wait more than 15 minutes beyond the printed schedule for their bus, to target lines that were chronically late and to clean buses. It has not been rebudgeted for the current fiscal year.

From September through March, when they were laid off, additional transit supervisors and car cleaners, hired specifically for the Clean/On-Time Program did a superb job overseeing Muni schedules and making sure that buses were clean. Over the past six months from January 15 through June, Muni received approximately 50,000 requests for rebates from.

Muni's Passport Sales Are Booming

Muni's Passport program, selling 1-, 3- and 7-day Passports to San Francisco tourists has mushroomed. In the first six months of FY 92-93, sales were a whopping $889,517. That's almost double what sales were last year and the year before for the entire 12 months. For a look at how the program has grown, look at these figures from past years: FY 89/90 $673,258, FY 90/91 $928,210, FY 91/92 $1,069,283.

If the sales rate remains constant, Passport sales should climb to at least $1.5 million by the end of FY 92/93. Since the program's inception in June 1989, it has earned over $3.5 million for Muni.

Photo: Gretchen Hildner

John Corser selling Passports at Moscone Center

Muni Begins 14 Mission Trolley Wire Upgrade

In late February, Muni began a $4.8 million project with construction contractor L.K. Comstock & Company to replace existing overhead wire and upgrade the power system for the 14-Mission trolley bus line, one of Muni's most heavily used routes.

The project managed for Muni by UEB is part of Muni's multi-year program to remove aging segments of its overhead network. After construction, the 14 Mission overhead will be more reliable, require less maintenance and provide adequate power for Muni's new high capacity, 60 foot articulated trolley buses scheduled to run on Mission Street in 1994.

Cable Car Museum to Remain Open

Muni has chosen Friends of the Cable Car Museum at Washington and Mason to manage the Cable Car Museum at Washingotn & Mason Streets. The Pacific Coast Chapter of the Railway and Locomotive Historical Society managed the museum from its inception in March 1974. However, their current agreement expired at the end of March and they decided not to renew their contract.

In April, Muni circulated an interim Request for Proposals for any enterprise interested in taking on the job. Friends of the Cable Car Museum was chosen and assumes temporary management on July 15th for one year, while Muni solicits proposals for a long-term operator. During the year, Friends of the Cable Car Museum will expand displays and interpretive materials and oversee a souvenir concession.

Celebration of the Palms

On Friday, April 30th – National Arbor Day – Muni celebrated the planting of the first palm trees on Market Street during a special ceremony as part of the construction for Muni's F Market Historic Streetcar Line.

City dignitaries as well as representatives from the local neighborhoods lined up to throw shovels of dirt around one designated tree in a symbolic "christening" of the palms.

Photo: Carmen Magaña

Some of the new palm trees on Market Street, just after replanting.

The trees – Canary Island palms like those in the median strip of Dolores Street – were chosen to continue the special identity they already impart to the Castro, Noe Valley, Church Street and Mission neighborhood commercial districts. These rugged trees are also drought-resistant and able to survive the persistent westerly winds in the area. Thirty-seven trees, each 20 feet tall and each weighing three-and-a-half tons, are being planted on the new median strips on Market between Castro and Duboce. Later, an additional 14 palms will be planted between Duboce and Valencia. Decorative shrubbery called Dwarf New Zealand Flax will be planted in between the trees.

Included in the festivities at the Celebration of the Palms, which was made possible by F-Market contractor Stacy & Witbeck, were music played by the Mission High School Band, a special prize drawing held for the public with prizes donated by a host of area merchants and organizations, and refreshments served to those in attendance with juice donated by Odwalla.

Comments from Duboce Triangle neighborhood residents on the palms have been positive. According to real estate broker Anthony Mariano, "The Canary Island palms are an excellent choice for street trees in the Upper Market. They offer a California feel and a San Francisco style that will soften the harshness of this busy commercial thoroughfare and give it more of a 'pedestrian-friendly' feel." And five-year-old Zachary Matheson had this to say: "I think it's a good idea 'cause when it's sunny out, the trees will give people [waiting for streetcars] shade."

A Blast from the Past

On July 4, 1860, the San Francisco Market Street Railroad began horsecar service from California & Market on Market and Valencia to 16th Street. Later steam dummies (small steam locomotives) were used.

Popular entertainments, including horse racing at the Pioneer Race Course near Folsom and 25th and the attractions at private parks such as The Willows and Woodward's Gardens, were major reasons for transit service to the Mission District during this era.

Muni Expands Recognition of Operators Who Help Disabled

Operator Cal Davis of Muni's Kirkland Division has been chosen Muni's first Accessibility Employee of the Quarter. The new quarterly award honors those operators who go beyond the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) to aid the disabled. ADA requires that operators call out stops, pull into bus zones to ease boarding and alighting for the disabled and seniors, and use the kneeler in a helpful fashion.

According to Manager of Accessible Services Annette Williams, "This award will recognize the operators who are most sensitive to the needs of the disabled, and help to highlight the legal requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act."

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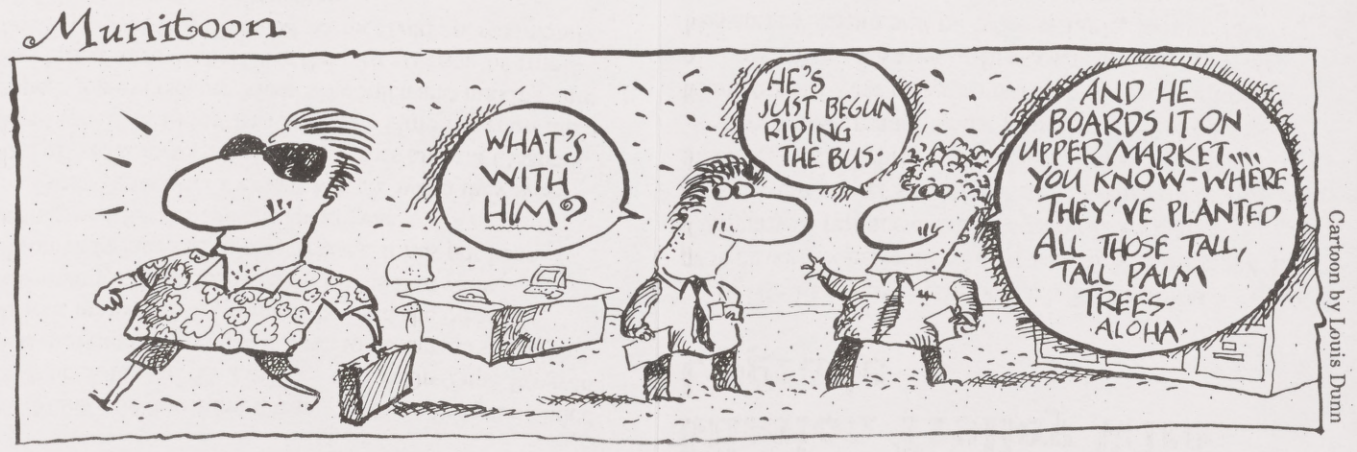
WHAT'S WITH HIM?
HE'S JUST BEGUN RIDING THE BUS.
AND HE BOARDS IT ON UPPER MARKET... YOU KNOW-WHERE THEY'VE PLANTED ALL THOSE TALL, TALL PALM TREES. ALOHA.

Cartoon by Louis Dunn

City Changes F-Market Stop Location

Thanks to the support of over 50 Market Street merchants and residents and the Greater Market Street Development Association, the location of a boarding-island stop on the new F-Market historic streetcar line that was scheduled for elimination will stay where it is.

The new island-stop on the north side of Market at Haight/Gough will be in approximately the same location as an existing island, which was to be removed during trackway reconstruction in 1994 and replaced with an island several blocks west on Market at Valencia.

A number of restaurants, antique shops and a tourist hotel, located in the Haight/Gough vicinity made it clear that passengers were more likely to use a stop where there is higher merchant activity than at Market and Valencia where there are fewer stores and less foot traffic.

The City had originally been interested in locating the stop at Valencia to try to increase traffic flow on Market. In addition to the greater business activity between Haight and Gough, Haight and Market will be a transfer point for the 6, 7 and 71 lines, and the originally proposed stop at Valencia and Market was at the beginning of an uphill grade, posing potential problems for elderly and disabled passengers.

Rules of the Ride

Always exit from the rear of the bus to allow boarding passengers unimpeded access via the front door to the operator and fare box.

Did You Know

Nationally, the average number of vehicle trips taken on public transit is 2%, but in San Francisco, the average is 33%. Also in SF, 33% of the working population uses public transit. That's the third highest percentage among the country's major cities, trailing only behind Manhattan with 53% and Washington, D.C. with 37%.

Market Street Art in Transit

If you haven't heard of the Market Street Art-in-Transit Program, now is the perfect time to wander down Market Street on public transit and take a look.

The Market Street Art in Transit Program, part of the SF Art Commission's public art program, features various art forms, including performance art, film, paintings and poetry along the three-mile transit corridor from The Embarcadero to Castro Street. The purpose of the program is to explore the relationship of art to street life and to encourage people to explore Market Street's diverse neighborhoods. Coming up this summer are the following:

Artists Exhibit on Gannett Kiosks, the Gannett kiosks, located at Muni bus stops between The Embarcadero and Van Ness Avenue function as a mini-museum on the street for pedestrians as they exhibit a series of changing artists' displays.

Poetry Plaques on Muni Boarding Islands. Granite poetry plaques will be inset into eight new boarding islands currently being constructed on upper Market Street between Duboce Avenue and Castro Streets. The plaques will be inscribed with excerpts of poems by nine Bay Area writers who represent the richness of our Bay Area literary history. Poets selected are Robert Grenier, June Jordan, Edith Jenkins, Kenneth Rexroth, Allen Ginsberg, Gary Soto, Marilyn Chin, Diane di Prima and Nellie Wong.

The Market Street Art in Transit Program is the first street art program to collaborate with Muni, featuring projects both in the subway tunnel and above ground.

Credits

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